The Self of Matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both. —*The Voice of the Silence*

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SEEING OR UNDERSTANDING?

MATERIALISM has various forms. Among them are both philosophical materialism and what may be called moral materialism. The philosophical materialist may, as was often the case in the eighteenth century, be a devotee of freedom and a servant of his fellow man. Materialism was then a weapon against the tyranny of theological authority, a practical means of emancipating the mind from the rule of priestcraft. Moral materialism, however, has always been the same. It finds fulfillment in material things. It sometimes happens that moral materialists are skillful in using a language which claims allegiance to "spiritual" things, and then the terrible Karma of hypocrisy overtakes a civilization.

The worst of this Karma is the tendency to insist that refined material effects are the keys to spiritual knowledge. This was the curse of Spiritualism, in the nineteenth century, and it bids fair to become a major delusion in the present. Materialism, after all, is a habit of mind. Its god is power, its method is manipulation, its goal, "results." Not growth, but a multiplication of "things," is the materialist's idea of progress. And freedom, for the materialist, becomes an uninhibited and uninterrupted pursuit of the things he wants and enjoys.

But when, as they must, the sweets of gross material enjoyment turn tasteless or sour, when pleasure becomes monotony, and self-

indulgence gives way to surfeit as well as more tangible ills, a change may begin in popular attitudes. Discovery of the psychic world is hailed as a breakthrough of high significance. Materialism is not abandoned, but its objects are transformed into psychic satisfactions. Desirable states of feeling are equated with ancient goals of inner attainment, and sights and sounds are mistaken for the milestones of spiritual growth. Prophets who claim to be able to lead people across thresholds of matter into the world of psychic experience gain profitable popularity, while the claims of merely material know-how are soon transferred to the specialist in producing psychic effects.

It is under such circumstances that an age suffers the heaviest penalties for its long neglect of the true meaning of the higher life. The vulgar materialism of the past was a form of delusion, but it was at least limited to outer planes. Now, with the advent of psychism, the delusion moves to subtler planes of being, where the erosions of character and disintegrations of virtue work more rapidly and are more extreme. Now, not merely is the higher life ignored, but its meaning is misconceived; the wise encouragements and admonitions of true teachers are replaced by appetites of the inner senses. An extreme perversion of the religious instinct results, and those sentinels of the soul's necessities, counsels lodged by sages of the past in tradition and simple custom, can no longer exert their influence. The demands of the psychic senses are imperial, and as their satisfaction is identified with "religion," or miscalled "spiritual" activity, the final price of moral materialism is paid, for with loss of discrimination comes loss of all.

It is not without reason that the Teachers have endowed with fateful meaning expressions such as "moment of choice." Such destiny-reaping junctures are real. They mark the decisions between the psychic and the spiritual, and in a civilization which makes little distinction between the two, only egoic strength brought forward from old times of striving, perhaps under conditions less prejudicial, can lead to the right course. So it is that the Teachers speak of the importance of self-restraint in small matters, of the need to fill the mind with high themes, and of the strengthening effect of devotion to the needs of others. These are not sentimental or moralistic instructions, but indicate the laws by which the student may preserve the roots of his moral discrimination and learn how to tell the difference between the path to the higher life and the path

to self-destruction. The time will come when his immortal individuality will depend upon this moral discrimination, and when his decisions will have to be made alone.

There are indeed tides in the affairs of men. We know without being told what are the tides most evident in Kali Yuga. Yet there is also the growing counter-current in the world established by the Teachers of Theosophy. The Theosophical Movement is a tide bearing moral discrimination. It begins its rise in individuals and its purpose is to gather into a common flow those who are able to recognize and to make themselves contributors to its saving beneficence. The individuals join to shape a nucleus, and around that nucleus may accumulate in ever-widening association all who have felt in their hearts the meaning and promise of future evolution.

A first step in this direction, surely, comes with the capacity to distinguish between the psychic and the spiritual. Writing on this subject in the *Path* for May, 1892, Mr. Judge spoke of the fact that while psychic perceptions may seem to transcend by far the limits of ordinary waking consciousness, they are by no means "spiritual." As he put it: "Clairvoyance and similar phenomena are explicable by the knowledge of the inner man, and that being so, it is straining a point and degrading a great idea to say that the higher self is involved." The trained seers of the esoteric schools, he said, have a complete knowledge "of all the forces at work and of all the planes to which his or her consciousness gains entry." But there are not yet such seers in the Western world, he added, and the reports of psychics cannot be trusted. The psychic does indeed "see things," and this may seem a great attainment to those who are blinded by the materialistic tendency, being too much impressed by "results." So also with the perceptions made possible by chemicals of one sort or another—there may be "seeing," but hardly an understanding of what is seen, or why. As Mr. Judge said in general of clairvoyant perception, and of those who see while in mesmeric trance: "But that is only the use of inner sight and hearing; it is not the use of the inner understanding."

WHY "THE PATH"?

THIS Magazine is not intended either to replace or to rival in America *The Theosophist,* nor any other journal now published in the interest of Theosophy.

Whether we are right in starting it the future alone will determine. To us it appears that there is a field and a need for it in this country. No cultivating of this field is necessary, for it is already ripe.

The Theosophist is the organ of the Theosophical Society, now spread all over the civilized world; its readers and subscribers are everywhere, and yet there are many persons who will not subscribe for it although they are aware of its existence; furthermore, being an Indian publication, it necessarily follows, because of certain peculiar circumstances, that it cannot be brought to the attention of a large class of persons whom this journal will endeavor to reach.

But while the founders of *The Path* are Theosophists, they do not speak authoritatively for the Theosophical Society. It is true that had they never heard of Theosophy, or were they not members of the Society, they would not have thought of bringing out this magazine, the impulse for which arose directly from Theosophical teachings and literature.

It is because they are men, and therefore interested in anything concerning the human race, that they have resolved to try on the one hand to point out to their fellows a Path in which they have found hope for man, and on the other to investigate all systems of ethics and philosophy claiming to lead directly to such a path, regardless of the possibility that the highway may, after all, be in another direction from the one in which they are looking. From their present standpoint it appears to them that the true path lies in the way pointed out by our Aryan forefathers, philosophers and sages, whose light is still shining brightly, albeit that this is now Kali Yuga, or the age of darkness.

The solution of the problem, "What and Where is the Path to

NOTE.—This article is the opening editorial of the first issue of Mr. Judge's *Path*—April, 1886. It has been previously reprinted in THEOSOPHY under the above title, which is our own.

Happiness," has been discovered by those of old time. They thought it was in the pursuit of Raja Yoga, which is the highest science and the highest religion—a union of both. In elaborating this, they wrote much more than we can hope to master in the lifetime of this journal, and they have had many kinds of followers, many devotees, who, while earnestly desiring to arrive at truth, have erred in favour of the letter of the teachings. Such are some of the mendicants of Hindoostan who insist upon the verbal repetition of OM for thousands of times, or upon the practice of postures and breathing alone, forgetting that over all stands the real man, at once the spectator of and sufferer by these mistakes. *This is not the path.*

At the same time we do not intend to slight the results arrived at by others who lived within our own era. They shall receive attention, for it may be that the mind of the race has changed so as to make it necessary now to present truths in a garb which in former times was of no utility. Whatever the outer veil, the truth remains ever the same.

The study of what is now called "practical occultism" has some interest for us, and will receive the attention it may merit, but is not *the* object of this journal. We regard it as incidental to the journey along the path. The traveller, in going from one city to another, has, perhaps, to cross several rivers; may be his conveyance fails him and he is obliged to swim, or he must, in order to pass a great mountain, know engineering in order to tunnel through it, or is compelled to exercise the art of locating his exact position by observation of the sun, but all that is only incidental to his main object of reaching his destination. We admit the existence of hidden, powerful forces in nature, and believe that every day greater progress is made toward an understanding of them. Astral body formation, clairvoyance, looking into the astral light, and controlling elementals, is all possible, but not all profitable. The electrical current, which when resisted in the carbon, produces intense light, may be brought into existence by any ignoramus, who has the key to the engine room and can turn the crank that starts the dynamo, but is unable to prevent his fellow man or himself from being instantly killed, should that current accidentally be diverted through his body. The control of these hidden forces is not easily obtained, nor can phenomena be produced without danger, and in our view the attainment of true wisdom is not by means of phenomena, but through the development which begins within. Besides that, man-

kind in the mass are not able to reach to phenomena, while every one can understand right thought, right speech, and right action.

True occultism is clearly set forth in the Bhagavad Gita, and *Light on the Path,* where sufficient stress is laid upon practical occultism, but after all, Krishna says, the kingly science and the kingly mystery is devotion to and study of the light which comes from within. The very first step in true mysticism and true occultism is to try to apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, without which the very highest progress in the practice of magic turns to ashes in the mouth.

We appeal, therefore, to all who wish to raise themselves and their fellow creatures—man and beast—out of the thoughtless jog trot of selfish everyday life. It is not thought that Utopia can be established in a day; but through the spreading of the idea of Universal Brotherhood, the truth in all things may be discovered. Certainly, if we all say that it is useless, that such highly strung, sentimental notions cannot obtain currency, nothing will ever be done. A beginning must be made, and has been, by the Theosophical Society. Although philanthropic institutions and schemes are constantly being brought forward by good and noble men and women, vice, selfishness, brutality and the resulting misery, seem to grow no less. Riches are accumulating in the hands of the few, while the poor are ground harder every day as they increase in number. Prisons, asylums for the outcast and the magdalen, can be filled much faster than it is possible to erect them. All this points unerringly to the existence of a vital error somewhere. It shows that merely healing the outside by hanging a murderer or providing asylums and prisons, will never reduce the number of criminals nor the hordes of children born and growing up in hotbeds of vice. What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny. This is offered to a reasonable certainty in the Aryan literature, and those who must begin the reform, are those who are so fortunate as to be placed in the world where they can see and think out the problems all are endeavoring to solve, even if they know that the great day may not come until after their death. Such a study leads us to accept the utterance of Prajapati to his sons: "Be restrained, be liberal, be merciful"; it is the death of selfishness.

"HISTORY" BY H.P.B.

IN his article "The Synthesis of Occult Science," Mr. Judge remarks that "the authors of the ancient wisdom have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our every-day 'sense-perception'." It follows that the use H. P. Blavatsky makes of the forms of Western learning will give them a vastly expanded purview, although this advantage may not be readily recognized by one habituated to the uses of modern scholarship. Yet a reader who seeks more from books than precise scholarship may discern, through careful study, the unique overview provided by such works as *The Secret Doctrine*.

Consider for example the role of history in this book. In exoteric knowledge there is always a gap between an essentially external view of historical events *and* a rationally contrived metaphysics or an individualistic conception of an inner spiritual life. It is this gap that is closed in *The Secret Doctrine*. Here we find no tension between the transcendental and the temporal, and no frustrating hiatus between the notions of "is," "ought," "can," and "must" in ethical thought. We are invited to consider our individual potentialities and limitations in terms of a common human nature that is continuously alterable and finally perfectible under laws of cosmic evolution that are reflected in the universal history of mankind, extending into a remote but recoverable antiquity. If we do not yet know our own far-flung potentialities, or understand our human limitations in a reflective temper, this is because we are not really *aware* of our immense collective inheritance, nor do we see why, in the course of a long involution into matter, this inheritance became inaccessible to our materializing minds.

H.P.B. points to the primeval revelation granted to the ancestors of the whole race of mankind (*S.D.* I, xxx). The Wisdom-Religion is the inheritance of humanity, not of any privileged "race" or nation (*S.D.* I, xviii). Its truths are as old as thinking man, actualities visible only to the eye of the real Sage and Seer, and orally revealed to man and preserved in the *adyta* of temples through initiation.

"Thus every nation received in its turn some of the said truths, under the veil of its own local and special symbolism; which, as time went on, developed into a more or less philosophical cultus, a Pantheon in mythical disguises." We are enabled by *The Secret Doctrine* to raise our sights from the local and the heterogeneous to the universal and the homogeneous, to deepen our insight by piercing the veil rather than by exchanging one veil of symbolism for another. We are helped to withdraw our consciousness from the external precipitations and materializations in recorded History (or historical time) into our inmost recesses, perhaps to the Karana-sharira (the sheath of subtle, luminous, noumenal, or causal substance), which may bring into view our "soul-memories" of a past human evolution, helping us to stand outside history, as it were. When this is achieved, we shall be able to open and direct the "Eye of Dangma" ("intimately connected with the third eye" now lost to man) "toward the essence of things in which no Maya can have any influence."

In this way, in time, the mind may become free of the partisan perspective of individual skandhas and locus in space and time—taking a wider, deeper, and nobler view of the human inheritance than any extant in the modern world; grasping through a study of likes and dislikes the reasons for the hold of a particular and complex set of skandhas over man's kama-manasic rationalizations; appreciating and accepting the "relentless" course of the workings of Karma-Nemesis in the lives of individuals, races, and nations; developing patience with the limitations of ourselves and of others, and finding a detachment from the delusions of cultural egotism everywhere that can only come from a cyclical (rather than a unilinear) view of historical evolution; seeing the continuity in recorded history as a mirroring of the continuity of individual and collective action on the plane of conflict among personalities with their rival but short-sighted notions of want, need, and interest; recognizing that the facts of recorded history are effects in relation to the crucial causal chains generated in pre-history during the earlier Races; regarding the episodic experiences of partial collectivities in history as the cruder shadowings of archetypal patterns of cosmic involution and human evolution depicted in primordial myths and legends, and recorded in the secret history of occult tribulations in the School; and, finally, studying our own psychological make-up and the development of earlier Races in the present and earlier

Rounds.

This is a tremendous undertaking. H.P.B.'s genius and method make it a possibility for a wider range of human beings on this planet than ever before. She speaks to each and all, awakening our deepest memories and dormant perceptions.

The consciousness of human beings is, for the greater part and most of the time, intensely bound up with their personalities conditioned by the influences of this life. Men are all too apt to externalize their internal defects (inherent in their lower Upadhis and their habitual use of them) and project them upon their own race or family or nation or some other. Further, because of the "need" of the personality to "belong," while evading confrontation with its individuality (which must stand on its own and shine by its own light), human beings tend to make sectarian claims on behalf of the group with which they are identified by birth—or by a choice which is more emotional than rational—and thus are caught up in those materializations of thought and feeling that constitute the degradation of every group, religion, and nation. These identifications reinforce false identity, false alibis, narrow attachments, and aversions, by invoking the apologetics and distortions of "cunningly made-up History." They lead men to deny their debts to remote ancestors or their own share in the iniquities of the past and the injustices of the present. Also, they look outside themselves at fragmentary and distorting portions of history that obscure the continuity and interdependence of the past endeavors and failures of mankind. Caught up especially in the current doctrines and fashionable slogans, they see the past largely in terms flattering to their present predicament. Reacting rebelliously against received notions is not much better, and far from the same as achieving a true objectivity.

H.P.B.'s use of history enables us to internalize all external defects and excrescences in our own immense past as Egos, thus assuming instead of evading responsibility; to look at all historical epochs and sectarian claims and human achievements from the standpoint of the needs of the soul and of spiritual growth; to reflect upon the ancient war in the Fourth Race between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness—a war in which we were all involved and which has left its marks and effects, not only upon history and human institutions, but also upon our psychic natures and our very capacity for reading historical lessons. We now use language in an

inverted manner and pervert the vocabulary of soul-life to serve the egotistic purposes of the lower Manas. But as students of *The Secret Doctrine,* we may gradually learn to see that the mental habit of regarding everything unpleasant in our collective and individual lives as unjust or fortuitous merely traps us in time and makes us lose touch with reality. Nature does not move by fits and starts, and there are no "accidents" in history or in our lives; what we cannot comprehend is not intrinsically inexplicable. The more we universalize our thinking and free our feelings from personal bias, and the more we contemplate the vast perspective of cosmic evolution and of pre-history, the more we can at least partially unravel the tangled skeins of collective Karma and cyclical manifestations of phenomena. These latter are mirrored in our own psychological tendencies. In short, human beings usually read and write history in ways that reinforce their own egotistic sense of uniqueness and separateness. H.P.B.'s historical method enables us to learn from the laws of evolution and the facts of the mental history of mankind in a manner that is truly humbling to lower Manas and inspiring to higher Manas. The dignity of the human soul, in the Theosophical conception, requires us to look for explanations, not excuses, for our limitations, to seek a heightening rather than a drugging of our sense of responsibility.

H.P.B. writes about human history (as an integral part of cosmic evolution) from the vantage-point of "the sacred Science of the Past," the birth and evolution of which are lost in the very night of time. The primary source of this Science is the secret annals, preserved in lost and hidden libraries known only to the Lodge of Adepts. The noumenal patterns underlying the events thus recorded are also enshrined, we are told, in the Akasic records known to Initiates and dimly glimpsed by highly intuitive men on earth. A third source, accessible to humanity but comprehensible only to students of the Wisdom-Religion, is what H.P.B. calls the "memoirs of Humanity," the myths and legends of all nations, especially conveyed under a veil of subtle symbolism and sustained allegory in the Puranas of the original Aryan Race. (See " 'Historical Difficulty'—Why?" *Theosophist,* October, 1883.) The first of these sources is not only unknown but even ruled out of court by the exoteric pedants, the ethnocentric scholars who produce fragmentary history in the framework of a jumbled, foreshortened chronology. The second of these sources cannot be tapped by those who have re-

course merely to the fallible method of induction from bits of material "evidence" on the grossest plane of the astral light, extending over the psycho-physical "shells" of past events. The third source became effectively available only after publication of H.P.B.'s writings, affording the necessary keys. Indeed, no scholar could write a *philosophy* of history that could compare in scope and universality and timelessness with the account of cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis given by an Initiate of H.P.B.'s stature.

H.P.B.'s history, unlike that of modern scholars (among whom hardly one or two like Toynbee even imperfectly echo the ancient teachings regarding the universal operation of cyclic law), presupposes what she calls "the law of parallel history and races." The historian, according to Ranke, must view all epochs with an equal eye, but no scholar has risen to the level of objectivity and universality implicit in H.P.B.'s statement: "Humanity is the child of cyclic Destiny, and *not one of its Units* can escape its unconscious mission, or get rid of the burden of its cooperative work with nature."

Perspective on Natural Law

Western thought displays from the Greeks and the medieval Christians down to the enlightened of yesterday and today a belief that men's sense of values is a groping awareness of the organization of the universe, an organization not evident to the unreflective man, not provable by scientific methods, never wholly plain to the best and wisest men, but an *organization,* not a chaos. Over the ages, the clearest common indication of this feeling is the term *natural law,* which to be sure did not mean exactly the same thing to a Stoic, a Scholastic, or an eighteenth-century philosopher, but did to all three mean a faith in the substance of things hoped for. Or, to put it in another way, the very concept of *natural law* means that those who hold it believe that the gap between the real and the ideal, between what we have and what we want, is no abyss, not actually a gap, *but a relation.*

—Crane Brinton

letters • questions • comment

In Light on the Path, *students of Theosophy are admonished to "try to lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world." The verse continues, "Give your aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory." How is this admonition to be carried out without risking interference with the duties of others?*

Man, according to Theosophy, is an inseparable part of the One Spirit—one with the Whole to which he belongs. Duty is that which we owe mankind. "To lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world," means to fight *within one's self* the evils of the age. It means that the individual who is sincere in his desire to help will be subjected to all the temptations that pull down so many of his fellow men—such as alcoholism, sex excesses, money madness, and the like. And in the effort, it may sometimes seem, as Robert Crosbie warned, "as if everything conspired to laugh at us and deride our best efforts; but we know all that is but the dead weight of the world's conditions which the Masters, and those who have volunteered, are working continuously to lift." "The despondency of the age," he said, "is a general tendency, partly personal and partly belonging to the age." (*Friendly Philosopher.*)

This idea—that students may be fighting in themselves not only their own battles, but also the battles of the race—brings up some interesting questions pertaining to Karma. Is the Karma of such an individual heavier than that of the person who lives for himself alone, or is it lighter? Is his Karma mitigated, in any sense, by the fact that he has joined the company of those Great Souls who work only for mankind? If it *is* thus mitigated, why does H.P.B. say that "as soon as one steps on the Path leading to the Ashrum of the Blessed Masters . . . his Karma, instead of having to be distributed throughout his long life, falls upon him in a block and crushes him with its whole weight?" (THEOSOPHY I, 361.) Does this not seem unjust? If one fights the battles of the race, as well as his own, why should his difficulty be increased an hundredfold?

Upon a little reflection, it will be seen that the Law is in no sense unjust in this case. It is not unjust for the reason that, if successful, he stands to gain an hundredfold. By taking this more universal position, the student places himself under a higher Law, or rather under a phase of the one Law whose ratio is tremendously increased. The Masters have promised that the prize is worth every possible effort, every possible suffering and sacrifice.

The worker in Masters' Cause, therefore, would do well to adjust his inner attitude, which means that he should cease complaining. He should not allow his mind to dwell only upon the dark side of his Karma, but rather to keep the ideal and goal ever in mind. He should try to realize that he is indeed one of "fortune's favored soldiers," and that with the armor of Theosophy, he is equipped to surmount every temptation and every difficulty that may confront him.

Concerning the mitigation of Karma, *Aphorisms on Karma,* No. 13 states that "the effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects." In joining forces with "the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory"—with the Elder Brothers of Humanity, in other words—the resulting Karma of everything done is of a different quality from what is done for self alone.

The Karma is impersonal instead of personal, which means it is felt at the level of Soul, where there is oneness with the Whole; instead of at the personal level, where there is a feeling of separateness. In this sense, Karma is mitigated, because it becomes the Karma of the Whole. Does not Krishna indicate as much when he says: "But for those who, thinking of me as identical with all, constantly worship me, I bear the burden of the responsibility of their happiness"? (*Gita,* p. 67.) When you "try to lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world," then do you "enter into a partnership of joy, which brings indeed terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great and ever-increasing delight."

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

GNOSIS AND CHRISTIANITY: *Jesus—Logos—Christos*

IT is a most suggestive fact that there is not a word in the so-called sacred Scriptures to show that Jesus was actually regarded as a God by his disciples. Neither before nor after his death did they pay him divine honors. Their relation to him was only that of disciples and "master;" by which name they addressed him, as the followers of Pythagoras and Plato addressed their respective masters before them. Whatever words may have been put into the mouths of Jesus, Peter, John, Paul, and others, there is not a single act of adoration recorded on their part, nor did Jesus himself ever declare his identity with *his Father*. He accused the Pharisees of *stoning* their prophets, not of deicide. He termed himself the son of God, but took care to assert repeatedly that they were all the children of God, who was the Heavenly Father of all. In preaching this, he but repeated a doctrine taught ages earlier by Hermes, Plato, and other philosophers. Strange contradiction! Jesus, whom we are asked to worship as the one living God, is found, immediately after his Resurrection, saying to Mary Magdalene: "I am not yet ascended *to my Father;* but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto *my Father* and *your* Father, and to *my* God and *your* God!" (John 20:17.)

Does this look like identifying with his Father? "*My* Father and *your* Father, *my* God and *your* God" implies, on his part, a desire to be considered on a perfect equality with his brethren—nothing more. Theodoret writes: "The hæretics agree with us respecting the beginning of all things. . . . But they say there is not one Christ (God), but one above, and the other below. And this last *formerly dwelt in many;* but *the Jesus*, they at one time say is *from* God, at another they call him a SPIRIT." This spirit is the Christos, the *messenger* of life, who is sometimes called the Angel *Gabriel* (in He-

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NOTE.—"The Christian Scheme," begun in November, 1967, is collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky. It recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

brew, the mighty one of God), and who took with the Gnostics the place of the Logos, while the Holy Spirit was considered *Life*. With the sect of the Nazarenes, though, the Spiritus, or Holy Ghost, had less honor. While nearly every Gnostic sect considered it a Female Power, whether they called it *Binah, Sophia,* the Divine Intellect, with the Nazarene sect it was the *Female Spiritus,* the astral light, the genetrix of all things of *matter,* the chaos in its evil aspect, made *turbido* by the Demiurge. At the creation of man, "it was light on the side of the FATHER, and it was light (material light) on the side of the MOTHER. And this is the *'two-fold* man,' " says the *Sohar.* "That day (the last one) will perish the seven badly-disposed stellars, also the sons of man, who have confessed the *Spiritus,* the Messias (false), the Deus, and the MOTHER of the SPIRITUS shall perish."

Jesus enforced and illustrated his doctrines with signs and wonders; and if we lay aside the claims advanced on his behalf by his deifiers, he did but what other kabalists did; and only *they* at that epoch, when, for two centuries the sources of prophecy had been completely dried up, and from this stagnation of public "miracles" had originated the skepticism of the unbelieving sect of the Sadducees. Describing the "heresies" of those days, Theodoret, who has no idea of the hidden meaning of the word Christos, the *anointed* messenger, complains that they (the Gnostics) assert *that this Messenger or Delegatus changes his body from time to time, "and goes into other bodies, and at each time is differently manifested.* And these (the overshadowed prophets) use incantations and invocations of various demons and baptisms in the confession of their principles."

Neither in the *Homilies* nor any other early work of the apostles, is there anything to show that either of his friends and followers regarded Jesus as anything more than a prophet. The idea is as clearly established in the *Clementines.* Except that too much room is afforded to Peter to establish the identity of the Mosaic God with the Father of Jesus, the whole work is devoted to Monotheism. The author seems as bitter against Polytheism as against the claim to the divinity of Christ. He seems to be utterly ignorant of the Logos, and his speculation is confined to Sophia, the Gnostic wisdom. There is no trace in it of a hypostatic trinity, but the same overshadowing of the Gnostic "wisdom (Christos and Sophia) is attributed in the case of Jesus as it is in those of Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac,

Jacob, and Moses. These personages are all placed on one level, and called 'true prophets,' and the seven pillars of the world." More than that, Peter vehemently denies the fall of Adam, and with him, the doctrine of atonement, as taught by Christian theology, utterly falls to the ground, *for he combats it as a blasphemy*. Peter's theory of sin is that of the Jewish kabalists, and even, in a certain way, Platonic. Adam not only never sinned, but, "as a true prophet, possessed of the Spirit of God, which afterwards was in Jesus, *could not* sin." In short, the whole of the work exhibits the belief of the author in the kabalistic doctrine of permutation. The *Kabala* teaches the doctrine of transmigration of the spirit.

"God's son" is the immortal spirit assigned to every human being. It is this divine entity which is the *"only man,"* for the casket which contains our soul, and the soul itself, are but half-entities, and without its overshadowing both body and astral soul, the two are but an animal *duad*. It requires a trinity to form the complete "man," and allow him to remain immortal at every "re-birth," or *revolutio,* throughout the subsequent and ascending spheres, every one of which brings him nearer to the refulgent realm of eternal and *absolute* light.

"Angels and powers are in heaven!" says Justin, thus bringing forth a purely kabalistic doctrine. The Christians adopted it from the *Sohar* and the hæretical sects, and if Jesus mentioned them, it was not in the official synagogues that he learned the theory, but directly in the kabalistic teachings. In the Mosaic books, very little mention is made of them, and Moses, who holds direct communications with the "Lord God," troubles himself very little about them. The doctrine was a secret one, and deemed by the orthodox synagogue heretical. Josephus calls the Essenes heretics, saying: "Those admitted among the Essenes must swear to communicate their doctrines to no one any otherwise *than as he received them himself,* and equally to preserve the books *belonging to their sect,* and the *names of the angels*. The Sadducees did not believe in angels, neither did the uninitiated Gentiles, who limited their Olympus to gods and demi-gods, or "spirits." Alone, the kabalists and theurgists hold to that doctrine from time immemorial, and, as a consequence, Plato, and Philo Judæus after him, followed first by the Gnostics, and then by the Christians.

Thus, if Josephus never wrote the famous interpolation forged by Eusebius, concerning Jesus, on the other hand, he has described in

the Essenes all the principal features that we find prominent in the Nazarene. When praying, they sought solitude. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet . . . and pray to thy Father which is in secret" (Matt. 6:6). "Everything spoken by them (Essenes) is stronger than an oath. Swearing is shunned by them" (*Josephus* II., viii., 6). "But I say unto you, swear not at all . . . but let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay" (Matt. 5:34-37).

The Nazarenes, as well as the Essenes and the Therapeutæ, believed more in their own interpretations of the "hidden sense" of the more ancient Scriptures, than in the later laws of Moses. Jesus, as we have shown before, felt but little veneration for the commandments of his predecessor, with whom Irenæus is so anxious to connect him.

The Essenes "enter into the houses of *those whom they never saw previously,* as if they were their intimate friends" (*Josephus* II., viii., 4). Such was undeniably the custom of Jesus and his disciples.

Munk, in his work on *Palestine,* affirms that there were 4,000 Essenes living in the desert; that they had their mystical books, and predicted the future. The Nabatheans, with very little difference indeed, adhered to the same belief as the Nazarenes and the Sabeans, and all of them honored John the Baptist more than his successor Jesus. The Persian Iezidi say that they originally came to Syria from Busrah. They use baptism, and believe in seven archangels, though paying at the same time reverence to Satan. Their prophet Iezed, who flourished long prior to Mahomet, taught that God will send a messenger, and that the latter would reveal to him a book which is already written in heaven from the eternity. The Nabatheans inhabited the Lebanon, as their descendants do to the present day, and their religion was from its origin purely kabalistic. Maimonides speaks of them as if he identified them with the Sabeans. "I will mention to thee the writings . . . respecting the belief and institutions of the *Sabeans,"* he says. "The most famous is the book *The Agriculture of the Nabathæans,* which has been translated by Ibn Wahohijah. This book is full of heathenish foolishness. . . . It speaks of the preparations of TALISMANS, the drawing down of the powers of the SPIRITS, MAGIC, DEMONS, and ghouls, which make their abode in the desert."

There are traditions among the tribes living scattered about *beyond* the Jordan, as there are many such also among the descendants of the Samaritans at Damascus, Gaza, and at Naplosa (the ancient

Shechem). Many of these tribes have, notwithstanding the persecutions of eighteen centuries, retained the faith of their fathers in its primitive simplicity. It is there that we have to go for traditions based on *historical* truths, however disfigured by exaggeration and inaccuracy, and compare them with the religious legends of the Fathers, which they call revelation. Eusebius states that before the siege of Jerusalem the small Christian community—comprising members of whom many, if not all, knew Jesus and his apostles personally—took refuge in the little town of Pella, on the opposite shore of the Jordan. Surely these simple people, separated for centuries from the rest of the world, ought to have preserved their traditions fresher than any other nations! It is in Palestine that we have to search for the *clearest* waters of Christianity, let alone its source. The first Christians, after the death of Jesus, all joined together for a time, whether they were Ebionites, Nazarenes, Gnostics, or others. They had no Christian dogmas in those days, and their Christianity consisted in believing Jesus to be a prophet, this belief varying from seeing in him simply a "just man," or a holy, inspired prophet, a vehicle used by Christos and Sophia to manifest themselves through. These all united together in opposition to the synagogue and the tyrannical technicalities of the Pharisees, until the primitive group separated in two distinct branches—which, we may correctly term the Christian kabalists of the Jewish Tanaïm school, and the Christian kabalists of the Platonic Gnosis.[1] The former were represented by the party composed of the followers of Peter, and John, the author of the Apocalypse; the latter ranged with the Pauline Christianity, blending itself, at the end of the second century, with the Platonic philosophy, and engulfing, still later, the Gnostic sects, whose symbols and misunderstood mysticism overflowed the Church of Rome.

Amid this jumble of contradictions, what Christian is secure in confessing himself such? In the old Syriac Gospel according to Luke (3:22), the Holy Spirit is said to have descended in the likeness of a dove. "Jesua, full of the sacred Spirit, returned from Jordan, and the Spirit led him into the desert" (old Syriac, Luke 4:1, *Tremellius*). "The difficulty," says Dunlap, "was that the Gospels declared that John the Baptist saw the Spirit (the Power of God)

[1] Porphyry makes a distinction between what he calls "the *Antique* or *Oriental philosophy*," and the properly Grecian system, that of the Neo-platonists. King says that all these religions and systems are branches of one antique and common religion, the Asiatic or Buddhistic ("Gnostics and their Remains," p. 1).

descend upon Jesus after he had reached manhood, and if the Spirit then first descended upon him, there was some ground for the opinion of the Ebionites and Nazarenes who denied his *preceding* existence, and refused him the attributes of the LOGOS. The Gnostics, on the other hand, objected to the flesh, but conceded the Logos."

John's *Apocalypsis,* and the explanations of sincere Christian bishops, like Synesius, who, to the last, adhered to the Platonic doctrines, make us think that the wisest and safest way is to hold to that sincere primitive faith which seems to have actuated the above-named bishop. This best, sincerest, and most unfortunate of Christians, addressing the "Unknown," exclaims: "Oh Father of the Worlds . . . Father of the Æons . . . *Artificer of the Gods,* it is holy to praise!" But Synesius had Hypatia for instructor, and this is why we find him confessing in all sincerity his opinions and profession of faith. "The rabble desires nothing better than to be deceived. . . . As regards myself, therefore, *I will always be a philosopher with myself,* but I *must be priest* with the people."

"Holy is God the Father of all being, holy is God, whose wisdom is carried out into execution by his own Powers! . . . Holy art Thou, who through the Word had created all! Therefore, I believe in Thee, and bear testimony, and go into the LIFE and LIGHT." Thus speaks Hermes Trismegistus, the heathen divine. What Christian bishop could have said better than that?

The apparent discrepancy of the four gospels as a whole, does not prevent every narrative given in the New Testament—however much disfigured—having a ground-work of truth. To this, are cunningly adapted details made to fit the later exigencies of the Church. So, propped up partially by indirect evidence, still more by blind faith, they have become, with time, articles of faith. Even the fictitious massacre of the "Innocents" by King Herod has a certain foundation to it, in its allegorical sense. Apart from the now-discovered fact that the whole story of such a massacre of the Innocents is bodily taken from the Hindu *Bagaved-gitta,* and Brahmanical traditions, the legend refers, moreover, allegorically, to an historical fact. King Herod is the type of Kansa, the tyrant of Madura, the maternal uncle of Christna, to whom astrologers predicted that a son of his niece Devaki would deprive him of his throne. Therefore he gives orders to kill the male child that is born to her; but Christna escapes his fury through the protection of Mahadeva (the great God) who causes the child to be carried away to another city,

out of Kansa's reach. After that, in order to be sure and kill the right boy, on whom he failed to lay his murderous hands, Kansa has all the male newborn infants within his kingdom killed. Christna is also worshipped by the gopas (the shepherds) of the land.

Though this ancient Indian legend bears a very suspicious resemblance to the more modern biblical romance, Gaffarel and others attribute the origin of the latter to the persecutions during the Herodian reign of the kabalists and the *Wise men,* who had not remained strictly orthodox. The latter, as well as the prophets, were nicknamed the "Innocents," and the "Babes," on account of their holiness. As in the case of certain degrees of modern Masonry, the adepts reckoned their grade of initiation by a *symbolic* age. Thus Saul who, when chosen king, was "a choice and goodly man," and "from his shoulders upward was higher than any of the people," is described in Catholic versions, as "child of *one year* when he began to reign," which, in its literal sense, is a palpable absurdity. But in I Sam. 10, his anointing by Samuel and initiation are described; and at verse 6th, Samuel uses this significant language: ". . . the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee and thou shalt prophesy with them, *and shalt be turned into another man."* The phrase above quoted is thus made plain—he had received one degree of initiation and was symbolically described as "a child one year old." The Catholic Bible, from which the text is quoted, with charming candor says in a footnote: "It is extremely difficult to explain" (meaning that Saul was a child of one year). But undaunted by any difficulty the Editor, nevertheless, does take upon himself to explain it, and adds: *"A child of one year.* That is, *he was good and like an innocent child."* An interpretation as ingenious as it is pious; and which if it does no good can certainly do no harm.

If the explanation of the kabalists is rejected, then the whole subject falls into confusion; worse still—for it becomes a direct plagiarism from the Hindu legend. All the commentators have agreed that a literal massacre of young children is nowhere mentioned in history; and that, moreover, an occurrence like that would have made such a bloody page in Roman annals that the record of it would have been preserved for us by every author of the day. Herod himself was subject to the Roman law; and undoubtedly he would have paid the penalty of such a monstrous crime, with his own life. But if, on the one hand, we have not the slightest trace of this fable in history, on the other, we find in the official complaints of the

Synagogue abundant evidence of the persecution of the initiates. The *Talmud* also corroborates it.

The Jewish version of the birth of Jesus is recorded in the *Sepher-Toldos Jeshu* in the following words:

"Mary having become the mother of a Son, named Jehosuah, and the boy growing up, she entrusted him to the care of the Rabbi Elhanan, and the child progressed in knowledge, for he was well gifted with spirit and understanding.

"Rabbi Jehosuah, son of Perachiah, continued the education of Jehosuah (Jesus) after Elhanan, and *initiated* him in the *secret* knowledge"; but the King, Janneus, having given orders to slay all the initiates, Jehosuah Ben Perachiah, fled to Alexandria, in Egypt, taking the boy with him.

While in Alexandria, continues the story, they were received in the house of a rich and learned lady (personified Egypt). Young Jesus found her beautiful, notwithstanding *"a defect in her eyes,"* and declared so to his master. Upon hearing this, the latter became so angry that his pupil should find in the land of bondage anything good, that "he cursed him and drove the young man from his presence." Then follow a series of adventures told in allegorical language, which show that Jesus supplemented his initiation in the Jewish *Kabala* with an additional acquisition of the secret wisdom of Egypt. When the persecution ceased, they both returned to Judea.[2]

The real grievances against Jesus are stated by the learned author of *Tela Ignea Satanæ* (the fiery darts of Satan) to be two in number: 1st, that he had discovered the great Mysteries of their Temple, by having been initiated in Egypt; and 2d, that he had profaned them by exposing them to the vulgar, who misunderstood and disfigured them. This is what they say:

"There exists, in the sanctuary of the living God, a cubical stone, on which are sculptured the holy characters, the combination of which gives the explanation of the attributes and powers of the incommunicable name. This explanation is the secret key of all the occult sciences and forces in nature. It is what the Hebrews call the *Scham hamphorash*. This stone is watched by two lions of gold, who roar as soon as it is approached. The gates of the temple were never lost sight of, and the door of the sanctuary opened but once a year, to admit the High Priest alone. But Jesus, who had learned in Egypt

[2] Eliphas Levi ascribes this narrative to the Talmudist authors of "Sota" and "Sanhedrin," p. 19, book of "Jechiel."

the 'great secrets' at the initiation, forged for himself invisible keys, and thus was enabled to penetrate into the sanctuary unseen. . . . He copied the characters on the cubical stone, and hid them in his thigh; after which, emerging from the temple, he went abroad and began astounding people with his miracles. The dead were raised at his command, the leprous and the obsessed were healed. He forced the stones which lay buried for ages at the bottom of the sea to rise to the surface until they formed a mountain, from the top of which he preached." The *Sepher Toldos* states further that, *unable to displace* the cubical stone of the sanctuary, Jesus fabricated one of clay, which he showed to the nations and passed it off for the true cubical stone of Israel.

This allegory, like the rest of them in such books, is written *"inside and outside"*—it has its secret meaning, and ought to be read two ways. The kabalistic books explain its mystical meaning. Further, the same Talmudist says, in substance, the following; Jesus was thrown in prison, and kept there forty days; then flogged as a seditious rebel; then stoned as a blasphemer in a place called Lud, and finally allowed to expire upon a cross. "All this," explains Levi, "because he revealed to the people the truths which they (the Pharisees) wished to bury for their own use. He had divined the occult theology of Israel, had compared it with the wisdom of Egypt, and found thereby the reason for a universal religious synthesis."

However cautious one ought to be in accepting anything about Jesus from Jewish sources, it must be confessed that in some things they seem to be more correct in their statements (whenever their direct interest in stating facts is not concerned) than our good but too jealous Fathers. One thing is certain, James, the "Brother of the Lord," is silent about the *resurrection*. He terms Jesus nowhere "Son of God," nor even Christ-God. Once only, speaking of Jesus, he calls him the "Lord of Glory," but so do the Nazarenes when writing about their prophet *Iohanan bar Zacharia, or John,* son of Zacharias (St. John Baptist).

James does not even call Jesus *Messiah,* in the sense given to the title by the Christians, but alludes to the kabalistic "King Messiah," who is Lord of Sabaoth (5:4), and repeats several times that the "Lord" will come, but identifies the latter nowhere with Jesus. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord . . . be patient, for the coming of the Lord *draweth nigh*" (5:7, 8). And he adds: "Take, my brethren, the prophet (Jesus) *who has spoken in*

the name of the Lord for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience." Though in the present version the word "prophet" stands in the plural, yet this is a deliberate falsification of the original, the purpose of which is too evident. James, immediately after having cited the "prophets" as an example, adds: "Behold . . . ye have *heard* of the patience of Job, and *have seen the end* of the Lord"—thus combining the examples of these two admirable characters, and placing them on a perfect equality. But we have more to adduce in support of our argument. Did not Jesus himself glorify the prophet of the Jordan? "What went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yet, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. . . . Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born *of women* there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist."

And of whom was he who spoke thus born? It is but the Roman Catholics who have changed Mary, the mother of Jesus, into a *goddess*. In the eyes of all other Christians she was a woman, whether his own birth was immaculate or otherwise. According to strict logic, then, Jesus confessed John *greater* than himself. Note how completely this matter is disposed of by the language employed by the Angel Gabriel when addressing Mary: "Blessed art thou among *women.*" These words are unequivocal. He does not adore her as the Mother of God, nor does he call her *goddess;* he does not even address her as "Virgin," but he calls her *woman,* and only distinguishes her above other women as having had better fortune, through her purity.

The Nazarenes were known as Baptists, Sabians, and John's Christians. Their belief was that the Messiah was not the Son of God, but simply a prophet who would follow John. "Johanan, the Son of the Abo Sabo Zachariah, shall say to himself, "Whoever will believe in my *justice* and my BAPTISM shall be joined to my association; he shall share with me the seat which is the abode of life, of the supreme Mano, and of living fire" (*Codex Nazaræus,* ii., p. 115).

When the metaphysical conceptions of the Gnostics, who saw in Jesus the Logos and the anointed, began to gain ground, the earliest Christians separated from the Nazarenes, who accused Jesus of perverting the doctrines of John, and changing the baptism of the Jordan. "Directly," says Milman, "as it (the Gospel) got *beyond* the borders of Palestine, and the name of 'Christ' had acquired sanctity and veneration in the Eastern cities, he became a kind of *metaphysical impersonation,* while the religion lost its purely moral

cast and assumed the character of a *speculative theogony.*" The only half original document that has reached us from the primitive apostolic days, is the *Logia* of Matthew. The real, genuine doctrine has remained in the hands of the Nazarenes, in this Gospel of Matthew containing the "secret doctrine," the "Sayings of Jesus," mentioned by Papias. These sayings were, no doubt, of the same nature as the small manuscripts placed in the hands of the neophytes, who were candidates for the Initiations into the Mysteries, and which contained the *Aporrheta,* the revelations of some important rites and symbols. For why should Matthew take such precautions to make them *"secret"* were it otherwise?

Primitive Christianity had its grip, pass-words, and degrees of initiation. The innumerable Gnostic gems and amulets were weighty proofs of it. It is a whole symbolical science. The kabalists were the first to embellish the universal Logos,[3] with such terms as "Light of Light," the Messenger of LIFE and LIGHT, and we find these expressions adopted *in toto* by the Christians, with the addition of nearly all the Gnostic terms such as Pleroma (fulness), Archons, Æons, etc. As to the "First-Born," the First, and the "Only-Begotten," these are as old as the world. Origen shows the word "Logos" as existing among the Brachmanes. "The *Brachmanes* say that the God is *Light,* not such as one sees, nor such as the sun and fire; but they have the *God* LOGOS, not the articulate, the Logos of the Gnosis, through whom the highest MYSTERIES of the Gnosis are seen by the wise." The Acts and the fourth Gospel teem with Gnostic expressions. The kabalistic: "God's first-born emanated from the Most High," together with *that which is the "Spirit of the Anointing;"* and again "they called him the anointed of the Highest," are reproduced in Spirit and substance by the author of the *Gospel according to John.* "That was *the true light,*" and "the light shineth in darkness." "And the WORD *was made flesh.*" "And his *fulness* (pleroma) have all we received," etc. (John 1, et seq.).

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[3] Dunlap says in *God, the Son of the Man*: "Mr. Hall, of India, informs us that he has seen Sanscrit philosophical treatises in which the *Logos* continually occur," p. 39, footnote.

on the lookout

Satya-Yuga-Karis

Hardly anyone wonders, these days, what a Golden Age might be like. Among living men who have inquired into this subject, we can think of two: Arthur Morgan, who years ago wrote *Nowhere Was Somewhere* (Chapel Hill, 1946) to show that the literary Utopias, from Thomas More's on, were all founded on historical fact; and Vinoba Bhave, the Indian Gramdan reformer, who maintains that the active workers of the Gandhian movement are *Satya-Yuga-karis*—men who strive to make the Golden Age a reality in the present. So, according to these writers, golden ages have existed in the past and will exist again.

But are there any lost pockets of golden-age culture to be found in the world of today? Against this possibility is the spread of kali-yugic infection by all-penetrating modern communications and transport. We know how Bali was spoiled by avid Western sightseers, and how the static, stone-age harmony of Arizona's Hopi Indians has puzzled cultural anthropologists. But is there, anywhere, an independent society that embodies the virtues all men long for?

Utopian Society?

The health enthusiasts and champions of organic food products point to the valley of the "healthy Hunzas," east of Afghanistan, where some 25,000 people practice composting and are entirely free of cancer and the other degenerative diseases of our declining civilization. The secret of their longevity and astonishing vigor—they rival the Himalaya-climbing Sherpas in endurance—is said to be the rocky terrain which surrounds the valley, supplying their streams with minerals of unparalleled excellence in nutrition. The explanation seems physically reasonable. The natural endowments of the land, plus food organically grown, undoubtedly bring a natural health. And from these primary causes, it is suggested, flows the good society of the healthy Hunzas. Conceivably, however, this explanation puts the cart before the horse. In *After You, Marco*

Polo (McGraw-Hill, 1955), Jean Bowie Shor, who lived among the Hunzas for several weeks—an interlude in her adventurous journey along the Marco Polo route to China—has this to say:

> Money in Hunza is the least important of commodities. The silver Pakistani rupee, worth about twenty cents, is the favorite currency. The Hunzukut prefers the single rupee piece to the five- and ten-rupee notes, for silver keeps better than paper, and the Hunzukut rarely has occasion to spend more than one rupee at a time. Half the people in the country could not change a ten-rupee note.
>
> In Hunza, only the Mir [local ruler] has real need for money. He conducts all import and export on behalf of his subjects. Local trade is by barter, and the Hunzukut who during a lifetime accumulates the equivalent of $50 is considered a hoarder, even a miser. Seldom does a man handle more than $5 a year in cash.

Blessed Poverty

This economic simplicity seems a basic security of the Hunza people. A few years ago a prospector thought he had discovered a rich vein of gold, and the Mir was distraught. He knew that riches would destroy the Hunza life. "Had the strike been genuine," he said, "some gold-hungry country would have moved in on the pretext of protecting us." Fortunately, the ore was worthless. Hunza has no television, no radio, although the Mir runs the country by telephone, calling his representatives regularly. The talkative ones have phones which allow no outgoing calls. There is more on the Hunza sort of "affluence":

> Of what use is money in Hunza? There are no taxes, no license fees, no duties. [The Hunza man] cannot buy or sell land, for the land is very limited, and by law must remain in the family. The only large landowner is the Mir, with 320 acres. On occasion he gives a parcel to a deserving subject who has failed to inherit any. Or the Mir may lease an acre or two to a promising young couple at a tiny annual rental which may be paid in apricots, apples, meat, ibex horns, or services.
>
> No Hunza covets a cash surplus, even for the purposes of emergency. If a flood should sweep away his house, the neighbors will help him build another. Should his horse tumble into the gorge, a neighbor will lend him a horse until he can obtain a replacement. There are no banks, no moneylenders, no interest.

How can the Hunzas manage all this wonderful trust of one another, and what about the menace of aggressive nations, schooled in the domino theory of expansion?

"The Happiest People in the World"

The Hunzas, nominally in Pakistan, are next door to restless China, and only a few miles from the Russian frontier, yet they live peacefully and aloof from all political troubles and fears. How do they do it?

> "We are the happiest people in the world," the Mir said with a quiet sureness which precluded any boastfulness, "and I will tell you why. We have just enough of everything, but not enough to make anyone else want to take it away. You might call this the Happy Land of Just Enough."

Think of all the people who would have to go back to some kind of productive toil were the West to adopt these principles! No banks, no insurance companies, no department stores, no advertising. The change would practically wipe out our civilization as we know it. But we might in time get a golden age.

A Difficult World

Behind the whir of our technological appliances, and in spite of the ear-numbing buzz of the electronic media, one hears now and then the murmur of quiet questioning. In *Science Is Not Enough* (William Morrow, 1967), Vannevar Bush, called "the father of the modern computer," and now president of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C., wonders about the human realities which have been systematically hidden by scientific progress. He writes:

> This is a difficult world in which we live today, and scientific men do well to ponder their part in influencing the way in which we now proceed. But I believe that the extreme materialistic view is held mostly by those who become intoxicated by a bit of a grasp of material things. To pursue science is not to disparage the things of the spirit. In fact, to pursue science rightly is to furnish a framework on which the spirit may rise.

The Human Contribution

Dr. Bush is surely right in this, but his voice seems too diffident for generating the necessary conviction. Are we guilty only of "a bit of a grasp of material things"! Compared to the Hunzas, we are maniacs of Mammon, and somewhat the worse for wear in our soul-ignoring devotions. Dr. Bush muses above the battle, with a hardly justified composure, yet his thoughts have substance:

> Fear is not new in the world, nor the problem of evil. The rabbit that crouches as the owl swoops knows terror, and the mother partridge dragging a wing to lure the invader from her

chicks does so with a wildly beating heart. And that which is evil to the duck on her nest is good for the fox pups saved from starving. There are life and beauty in the world, but fear and evil are with them, for that is how the world was formed. And man, who gives these things names, wonders at his lot, and is baffled and confused.

There was no compassion in the world until man brought it. Nor was there beauty or virtue until he thought it so. His values do not all derive from his will to live, or from the sifting of selection. That a man will devote his life to the good of his fellows is not always a product of evolution, or of self-seeking that is sublimated. Altruism is a product of his mind, not of his seamy history.

The Example Set

We could use a lot more of such thinking from scientists of the stature of Dr. Bush. But what *is* this "mind" he intimates as real, and which can rise above our "seamy history"? If some principle in man is capable of this, why not a clarion call to its potentialities? Not many will be roused by gentle speculation. He thinks, perhaps, that the untrained "masses" cannot be moved by such appeals. But ancient masses heard them and responded. The law of collective social progress was long ago declared by Krishna, in the third discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Even if the good of mankind only is considered by thee, the performance of thy duty will be plain; for whatever is practiced by the most excellent men, that is also practiced by others. The world follows whatever example they set."

"Woman Power" Marshalled

In an editorial in the July *McCall's*—which the publishers apparently regard as "heroic," since they have been reprinting it as an advertisement in other magazines—the editors tell American women what they can do "to end violence in America." Women are to support a five-point program involving various controls, some legal, some through community pressure. They are to attempt to reduce the "outpouring of violence and sordidness" on television and movie screens by writing to the owners and managers of the mass media; boycott toys "that foster and glorify killing"; support gun-control legislation; get behind the movement for world law; and, finally, make book and magazine publishers feel the weight of enlightened opinion with "strong, reasoned letters" giving the woman's point of view.

"The Example They Set"

"Woman power"—against which "no force on earth can stand," as *McCall's* tells its customers—is to correct all these evils. Well, it won't hurt for them to try. But the question of why the evils have grown to such monumental proportions is hardly examined. Soul-searching is not risked. The program is for editorially directed good-doing on top of a serenely affluent complacency. One can agree that *McCall's* means well, but there can hardly be significant changes in the behavior-patterns of present civilization without intensive *high-thinking*—something which, as the teachers of the race have always known, is not possible without deliberately *plain living*. The virtues *McCall's* omits from discussion are well described, in both quality and origin, in the second book of Plato's *Republic* (and are also embodied in many respects in the Hunza land of "Just Enough").

Plato's Art

Plato, Madame Blavatsky often reminds us, concealed the sources of his hidden knowledge. As an Initiate, he had no choice. Yet he offered endless hints, and his art in this has created a considerable vocabulary of thought, in which "Socratic Irony" is not the least in importance. Plato resisted the tendency to premature system, he prevented interpretation from gaining a merely intellectual finality, with explanation of this well stated in the seventh epistle, where he declares it quite impossible to put anything resembling final truth in words. But despite this restraint, and the disguises of his mythic art, he became, as Emerson said, the source of "all things that are still written and debated among men of thought." "Yet," H.P.B. adds, "his commentators, almost with one consent, shrink from every passage which implies that his metaphysics are based on a solid foundation, and not on ideal conceptions." (*Isis Unveiled* I, xi.)

An Unquenchable Fire

We seem today in the midst of a Platonic revival. One has only to inspect past books on Plato now being reprinted, and read the new ones coming out, to see the evidence of this renewal of his inspiration. Among the former are Leonard Nelson's *Socratic Method and Critical Philosophy* (Dover paperback) and Paul Freidlander's *Plato: An Introduction* (Harper Torchbook); while the latter in-

clude Cushman's *Therapeia* (Chapel Hill) and Eric Havelock's *Preface to Plato* (Harvard University Press). And for impressive evidence of the security of Plato's secrets, as well as of the price paid for not suspecting them, there is John Herman Randall, Jr.'s article, "Plato as the Philosopher of the Artistic Experience," in the Summer 1968 *American Scholar*. Mr. Randall feels the effect but not the inner suggestion of what Plato wrote in his seventh letter. He rescues Plato from system-builders and sectarians, finding him great because inaccessible to commentators who would nail down his teachings and compile certified "reliable truth" out of them. All these commentators erred, he thinks. They did indeed, but not quite as Mr. Randall seems to suppose:

> The metaphysical doctrine traditionally attributed to Plato cannot be said to hold true of the world we encounter. "Platonism," taken literally—as the Neo-Platonists did, or the Christian Platonists, or the German Idealists—is a beautiful, inspiring, but in the end tragic illusion. It is not supported by any evidence that would hold water. It is not descriptive of what is, but rather a cosmic metaphor—seductive and misleading.
>
> Plato, then, is not a wonderful metaphysician. But he has been the inspirer of every great metaphysical mission in the Western tradition, from Aristotle down to the present.

Acceptable and Precocious Knowledge

So, while in some respects Mr. Randall does pretty well as Plato's defender, he fails, apparently, to see a difference between Neo-Platonism and Christian Platonism. Yet he feels much of what is living in Plato and doesn't want it spoiled by dogmatists and impatient moralists looking for sure-thing persuasions. The character of the times is revealed by the fact that, while Plotinus gains increasing respect among the Neo-Platonic thinkers, Iamblichus will have to wait a while longer. Iamblichus believed in "magic," and modern scholars have not yet matured their "rationalism" to the point where they are able to understand what such teachings of occultism mean and imply. Such lessons will no doubt come later, and in good time. Where are there now scholars prepared to learn the ethical foundations of practical occultism? Talk of "magic," these days, except in the context of Theosophy, means dabbling with "yogi" tricks, and stirs thinly veiled longings for illicit "powers."

The Undogmatic Philosophy

For Mr. Randall, Plato is none of the things people who want

to "use" him have claimed. He is not a formal metaphysician; he doesn't pretend to reveal "truth"; his "logic" won't bear close inspection; he wasn't even a "social reformer," except when prevailed upon by his young friend Dion. What Plato was, and is, is an artist and a poet. And this, as we might read it, means that Plato constructed everything he wrote with the intention of compelling the reader to find out for himself what lies implicit in the text. Plato will never exactly tell him, neither will he ever turn him away. He makes his reader struggle for meanings, and when they are found out they are really one's own. Mr. Randall sees this clearly enough:

> When the followers of Plato have been humanists, like the poet-philosophers of the Renaissance, they have been artists of human life. Inevitably, it seems, the great outbursts of creative artistic energy in the Western cultural tradition, like the Renaissance, and the Romantic movement, have turned for their philosophic expression to some form of Platonism. Even when they have been great scientists, like Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Newton or Einstein, they have been great scientists because they have possessed the artist's insight and imagination. Like Bertrand Russell in his Platonic periods, they have sought in science chiefly the beauty of the harmonious order of natural law, not the sweat and dirt of the multitude of facts.

Truth Is Virtue

> Take the two great objects of Plato's interest, the Good Life and Knowledge, which ultimately merge into one. In the dialogues they are seen through the eyes of the artist. The Good Life, both individual and social, there is treated as what the artist can discern of human possibilities, what he can create from the given human materials—an affair of imaginative vision, and of blending, reworking, remodeling in the continued light of that vision. Knowledge is taken to be what the artist's imagination perceives, the possibilities resident in his materials. Conceived as a human experience, the experience of knowing is the emotional experience the artist feels in the presence of objects discerned by his imagination.

Discernment of Possibilities

This may be read as the language of self-realization and practical application. Not a repetition of words, nor a construction of conceptual forms, but recognition of truth through the disciplined use of the imagination. Again, Mr. Randall says:

> In Plato himself, in the dialogues, the "Ideal" is not a "realm" apart, an isolated abode of detached essences; it is the sum of possible perfectings of existent natural and human materials. The

> Ideal, we can say, is a "process," not another realm at all. It is a process to be found operating in the imaginative experience of men—of men loving and talking, aspiring and thinking. Knowledge is not a glimpse into some impossible heaven, but an illumination cast upon actual human life by the discernment of its possibilities. Philosophy, Plato tells us, is the pursuit of what is "eternal" and "perfect." But "eternity" is a quality of human vision, not a description of authentic Being; and "perfection" is no attribute of any existence, but the experience clarified and made whole by the spirit of man—of man the artist.

The Great Ferment

Mr. Randall here frees Platonism of the charge of aspiring to static Platonic "essences" lying outside the world—untouchable, so to speak. He converts these essences into the goals of a higher pragmatism, which is surely better than storing them away in an unreachable heaven. Yet those invisible planes of being are nonetheless real, though useless to men and stultifying to thought when left as only intellectual "doctrines"—for doctrines, in the minds of habitual believers, become substitutes for realized truth. The unquestionable conclusion, however, to be drawn from Mr. Randall's article is that Plato's thought is very much alive today, and contributing vigor and vision to the ferment of ideas which are now the raw materials of the coming cycle.